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LADY
BLANCHE
AND
OTHER POEMS
BY
I D A.



600085164U



LADY BLANCHE, AND OTHER POEMS.



LADY BLANCHE,

AND

OTHER POEMS.

BY

I D A .



"Fancy, the ever-friendly shade,
Who still in roseate robe arrayed,
Oft paused on airy pinions light
To gild my path with visions bright."

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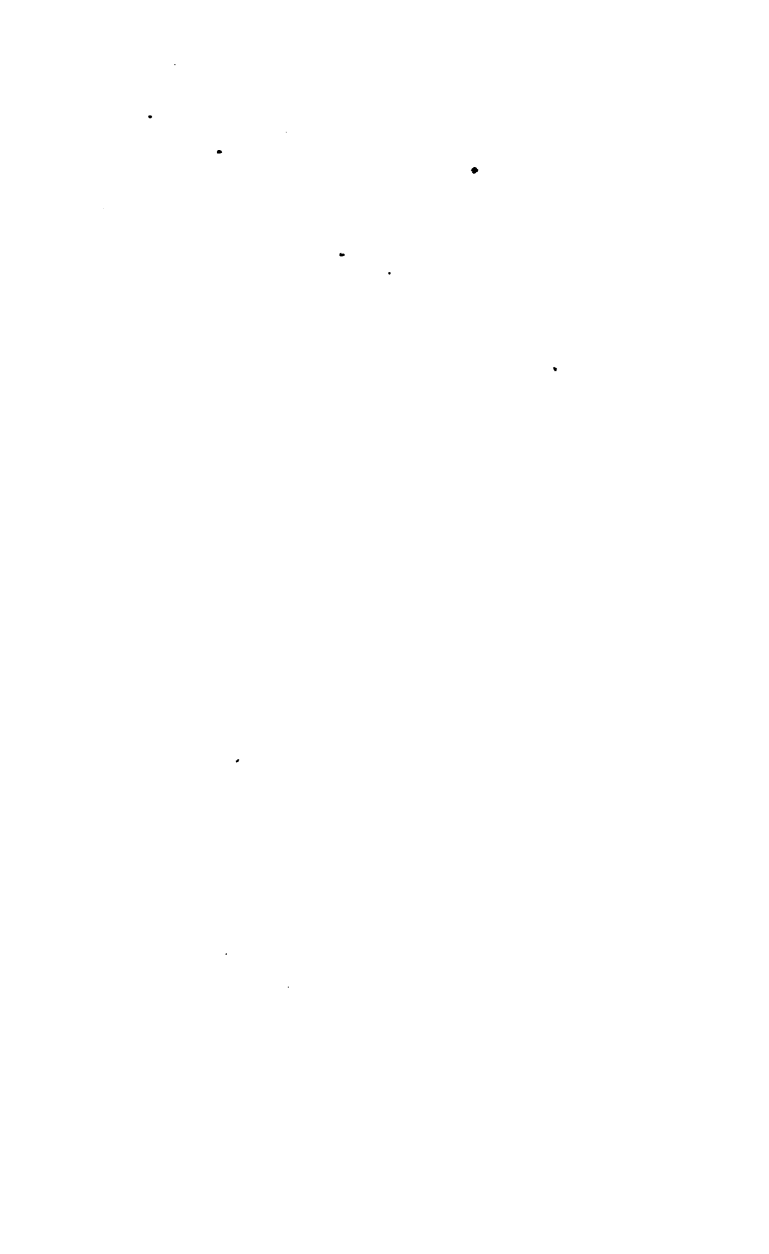
1875.

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RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED
TO
HIS EXCELENCY EARL DUFFERIN,
Governor-General of Canada,
IN ADMIRATION OF HIS DISTINGUISHED CHARACTER
AND BRILLIANT TALENTS,
AND AS
A GRATEFUL TRIBUTE IN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF HIS KIND
INTEREST IN
“IDA.”

BALLYMENNA, *January*, 1875.



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LADY BLANCHE, AND OTHER POEMS.



LADY BLANCHE.

HER soul was in her eyes, and they were worlds,
Where lived and shone all that we mortals know
Of what is great, true, tender, and divine.

Most rare her beauty, but the grace of form
Was yet but shadowed forth as being part
Of what must yet endow the Lady Blanche,
When woman's richer, fuller years would come:
Now, in her sixteenth summer, as she stood,
You saw the promise in her airy form,
That from that magic borderland of life
Had passed a vision soft, to pledge her vows—
The marriage vows—that made the girl a wife.

So Lady Blanche was wed, and so begins
The story of her life where it should end.

'The lord of Blanche was one of such rare kind—
Oh rare, indeed, let story-tellers hope,
If only for the sake of poor romance,
That must have heroes strong in truth and love
To decorate her page, and fire her song!

Sir Charles was tall, and wore his pale fair hair
With studied neatness o'er a brow that sloped
Too much to aid in more profound pursuits;
His mouth, just *rather* vulpine, some observed;
But pleasing on the whole his face, and bland,
As if he found the world a playground, where
All passions fed, and vanity appeased,
And wealth at will; the way was smooth enough,
E'en past "the forty's," as he was when wed.

Below that fair outside I'd fear to go,
All was so false, so cruel, and so base ;
But that our Blanche, my fairest heroine,
Must learn, from such vile source, the harshest facts
That ever man to trusting woman taught.

And so Sir Charles and Lady Blanche were wed,
And all the people praised Sir Charles' wife,
Who, like his other fair possessions, was the theme
For flattery's tongue to laud as his reward.
Just such a one as he deserved so well—
So young, so fond, and yet with such a mien
No duchess would outdo her perfect grace,
When Lady Blanche his ancient halls would sway.

How bland was his complaisance: "he was charm'd,"
As was his rule, with horse, or dog, or groom,
That pleased his taste fastidious, "with their points."
And then, he argued, marriage was the thing—
The safest embarkation at his age—
And the estates entailed; thus all was smooth.
And Blanche, the fair young bride of Elmwood Hall,
She found, when she had time to look, dear girl,
That through and through her *trousseau* was complete,
And gorgeous, too, with many deft devices,
To make fair woman fairer, used by art.

Gems, too, there were, in curious caskets laid,
Flashing, unseen but by their velvet nests;
These Lady Blanche would sometimes draw from thence,
And, clasping them on neck or arms, would watch
(With many a graceful curve and dainty pose)
How leapt they to the light, like living things,
And how light with them played, till she stood dazed
With her own splendour, and unclasped the gems.

Sir Charles he hunted, rode, and entertained;
And Blanche, on gala days, would sometimes join,
Though wanting in that *esprit* for the field
Which makes it life to win, or death to lose.

So passed one year, their first, in Elmwood Hall.
And then Sir Charles, without a hint or word
Of that blue d——, *ennui*, spoke of abroad;
Blanche wanted *tone*, which travel would impart,

He smiling said, because she was so young!
A doubtful smile, that some would think a *sneer*;
But Blanche was young, and did not pause to note
Those finer lines, that lie 'tween cold and heat;
She only knew he was no dearer than
The year before; and why—She did not search.
All seem'd the same, and with herself it was
The gay young life, emancipate from school,
The change of homes, the balls, the dress, the gems!
But yet she wanted *tone*; her lord was right;
And when the hawthorns blossomed in the park,
Sir Charles and Lady Blanche went duly forth.

CHAPTER II.

THEY travelled far and wide, where'er the arts
Held sway they went; and where doth art not sway
In these degenerate, artful times of ours?
They sailed on rivers, famous in their *Guides*,
And famous in themselves ere *Guides* were known;
Sojourned in cities, famous for some siege,
Or else notorious for their tables green.
And while Sir Charles his practised skill essayed
To nicely balance chance athwart the baize,
Where lay the shining prize, soon won or lost,
The Lady Blanche, in her own rooms apart,

Would wonder often why the time seem'd long—
Would feel a void, through all her life so gay—
But knew not why, yet knew that so it was.

Two years in polished wanderings thus had sped,
From scene to scene, o'er all the beaten track
Which modern feet, *de rigueur*, now must tread;
When the young wife, half timid, half afraid,
Ventured to speak from out her heart distraight,
A wish, so gently murmured, of their home.
“Domestic turned, your very latest whim?”
He said, his thin lips writhing with the sneer
Familiar to her now, and understood :
“But charmed he was, for travel was a bore,
And but endured for her advantage sake.”

Then took his eyeglass down, and looked at Blanch e
Next put it up again, and swore “By Jove !”
Then her sweet face, so pale and tearful now,
Moved his vain soul a new hope to indulge—
An heir! paternal honours! a firstborn!
Ah! *now* the pretty minx might have her way,
If partial fate but grant him his desires;
And so the pair returned to Elmwood Hall,
Where he was doomed to wear and vex his heart
In hopeless waiting for what never came.

Now, when they had returned, without mishap,
And had a joyous welcome from their friends,
With *many* greetings, warm and grateful too,

From those they called their people—they who dwelt
Around the sheltering shadow of the Hall,
And gave allegiance due with all their hearts :
Then found our pair, what was most strange and sad,
Yet true, most true, and pity 'tis 'twas true,
That while their friends rejoiced, yet could not they !

Sir Charles felt bored—he often swore he was—
And filled the Hall with guests, whose revels gay
Oft woke his cawing neighbours in the wood,
Until his *friends* would even *kindly* say
Sir Charles was as a man who fled himself !
O mirth, and song, and wine, and mazy dance !
Ye are the foils to fence marauding time,
And slay the circling hours as they fly,
As well knew he, the lord of that old Hall,
Who tried ye oft by turns, and oft at once.
But when our host and lady, calm and grand,
E'er found themselves untended and alone,
So sure they found their mirth was as the strains [fell,
Which soothed and charmed them while they rose and
But left no happy echo in their hearts.
And soon this mocking void had grown distinct,
Or broken oft by open sneers and coarse,
By him who always laid his smiles aside
As lights go out, when the last guest is gone.

A disappointed man he swore he was.
Where were his hopes ? He was no longer young—

A puling face before him, always sad !
Then in deep potions pledged his woes, till sleep,
With heavy pinions, as a bird of prey,
Swooped down and bore him off to regions dark !
While Lady Blanche, thro' all her woman's soul,
So quick to feel, so faithful to divine,
Shrunk back abashed, and quivering to her core
In pride and anguish, all too deep for words.

And thus they lived, a growing gulf between ;
For when his moods were dark, she drew apart,
Silent and sad with all locked in her breast.
Then in her chamber which o'erlooked the wood,
A desolate relief she found in tears
That fell as if their source were wells of woe !

Sometimes sweet pity for his fallen state
Would flood her spirit o'er, and drown her pride,
And quench awhile the memory of her wrongs, [been!"
That in its strength cried "Charles, what might have

And oftimes in her room, thus all alone,
Her life would look as 'twere a dream she dreamt,
While yearnings strange would fill her lonely heart,
To hear him even kindly speak her name :

Then would she steal all white-robed from her couch,
Her raven hair around her shoulders flung,
And from her chamber in the stilly night,
And down the carved stairs would lightly pass—
Then pause, half shy, half frightened, where he lay—

The dull insensate in his drunken sleep!

Ah ! little recked he, that the wife he scorned—
The angel of his home—thus entered in,
And o'er him hung with deep regretful love,
That cried from all the cheerless void within,
“ Would that he'd wake and say *it is* a dream !”

And once, as thus she watched, he did awake
From an unhallowed sleep, wherein the past—
The hidden past—had clamoured for a place :
Then did his guilty mind see in her form
The phantom of a well-known form and face,
Whose memory filled his craven soul with dread ;
Then, springing from his couch with frantic oaths
And murderous threats, at her pale baby face,
That thus had dared to break on his repose,
He swore and stormed until she wildly fled,
And knew henceforth her's was a hopeless grief.
Then would strange whispers pass about the hall,
And tales that, half-forgotten, should have slept ;
And one dark story of a girl and babe,
Who, on a Christmas eve, long years ago,
Had crouched beneath his windows next the park,
And there been found—both dead upon the snow !

Next, one would ring a change upon this tale,
For they knew those who then had seen the babe
Clasped living to its mother's stiffened breast ;
Nay more, that in a gipsy's tent hard by,

That child, now grown a man, was known to live—
And wait to yet revenge his mother's wrongs.

So gossip ran, till Christmas-tide returned
Again with hoary honours to the Hall,
When, with the throng of festive guests who came,
Came one, among the rest, named Frederick Vaughan.

CHAPTER III.

THE son of an old friend of our gay host,
Who made much merry jesting of his age ;
He might have had a daughter now, he said,
As old as Fred, whom gaily he consigned
To Lady Blanche's most especial care,
And Lady Blanche in quiet welcome spoke
Of pleasant duties, happily imposed.

Nor were they words of empty import these ;
His were the face and port to whom men bow,
And woman's eyes but look on to admire :
High, square, imperial brow, with deep set eyes,
That could flash forth in fire or melt in love!—
Eyes in whose keeping lay the lustre rare,
Which genius gave as her illumined seals
To stamp him for her own by right divine !
And in the quaint old city whence he came,
Where 'yond the Rhine his studious youth was pass'd,

From words impassioned, and from flashing eyes,
She felt as if such moments could repay
Her years of unblest loneliness before.

"My heart was in the song," he whispered low,
"Oh, speak my love, and bless me with a word!"
Then leapt the truth victorious to her heart,
But woke no answering transport in her eyes,
Whose touching tenderness so plainly told—
"To me comes love and chivalry too late!"
While faintly then her lips could only breathe
His name, which never seemed so sweet before.

CHAPTER IV.

WAS ever time on fleeter pinions borne?
Was ever bliss so fraught with bitter pain?
With Lady Blanche, that old homeric feast,
Called *eating one's own heart*, had now begun.
Till Frederick came, resigned her chains she wore,
And only longed for death to set her free.

Now love had come and ope'd its portals fair,
And beckoned to her youth its gates to choose.
Oh, the wild anguish of that awful strife,
With only duty's icy voice to plead
For him whom never loving vow had bound,
And with his cruel baseness perilled hers!

And then o'er all those broken vows she wept,
Her rebel heart to Frederick true the while ;
But yet that truth must Frederick never know !

So raged these tempests of the heart until
The buds of early April had appeared ;
Then Frederick spoke of how the time had flown,
And Blanche, whose firm resolves had now been formed,
Told him their dream was dreamt, and they must part.

And one sweet morning then they met alone,
When even earth her very loveliest looked,
As if awoke from softest trance to nurse
The young creations of her swelling breast.

How blue the arching skies above them spread !
How glad the happy voices of the birds !
How freshly tender every leaf that ope'd
In the soft breeze that they together breathed !
For love—true love—would deck the meanest thing ;
But love, 'mong singing birds, and opening buds,
And greening boughs, thro' which the sun above
Smiles but to light the violets below,
Transforms the earth to heaven—so they found.
It was the first time in the wood they met,
And owning all the stern decrees of fate,
This sad, sweet hour would see their parting too.
And yet in silence still they wandered on,
Each slow to speak of what was in their hearts.
At length they reached a witching glade so green,

Where closer seen'd the boughs to interlace,
Down drooped the branch, and up the ivy ran ;
And stern the mighty elms stood side by side,
Like ancient veterans guarding pass so rare.

Here Lady Blanche now paused, for here she oft,
Unseen, had read the summer hours away ;
And when she told him this was her dear haunt,
'Twas sacred in his eyes as 'twere a shrine.
And then he bared his lofty brow, and knew
The hour had come that all his strength would try ;
But, first, upon an elm he carved her name,
And next, his own, both quaintly intertwined :
Then, turning, with his eyes of wondrous light,
And with the eloquence that love inspired,
Some token of affection there implored,
In guerdon of his own devotion true ;
Longing the while to clasp her to his breast,
For one brief moment of supremest bliss,
And prisoned there, learn from his beating heart,
How dear from her, one little sign of love !

It might not be, but stooping down, she culled
The early violets at her feet that lay,
And then, with ivy, wove them in a wreath,
And placed them o'er the names that Frederick carved.
This was the only pledge or sign she gave ;
But in the years of his that were to come,
The dearest memory of his life 'twould be.

And then, with one last lingering farewell,
There parted they. She wished to be alone,
While he returned to tell that ere the night,
His way must lead far, far, from Elmwood Hall.

But long ere evening's pensive hour had come,
There rose a clamour of my Lady Blanche—
Not in her room, nor ever seen since morn !
Then Frederick Vaughan, prepared to ride away,
Sprang from his steed to join the searchers there,
And, fearless, told how Lady Blanche and he
Had strolled among the elms, and thro' the park,
And how he left her while she rested there.

And there they found her—resting still—asleep !—
A sleep and rest earth had no power to break.
Her heart, worn out with love, and grief supprest,
No more could bear the all-unequal strain,
For when she rose to leave the dell for home,
Nature, o'ertaxed, in one deep swoon gave way,
Then to oblivion, deeper, darker, passed,
From which her spirit woke, and it was free !

But he, who wronged her young and hapless life,
On her too early death would never look ;
For as he passed the thickening shadows through,
Keen scanned he was by wild vindictive eyes,
'That thro' long years of outlaw there had watched,
A fierce and parricidal vow to keep.

Guy Fenwick, he, so daring and so strong.

As "Fen'ck the Fierce," thro' all the tribe was known,
And fostered by them with most jealous care,
That, come the hour of vengeance when it might,
Guy's hand alone should on the traitor wreak
Atonement for his gipsy mother's wrongs.

Now, roused by the alarm rang in the wood,
He leapt from where his furtive lair he kept,
Then glided with the panther's step and eyes,
That never from their object turned aside,
Till at a point their paths confluent meet—
Sudden he starts, before him, face to face!

Then burst the long-nursed vengeance of his soul,
And with a mocking laugh he hissed the words—
"The heir of thy fell nature, not thy name,
Sends thee to deepest shades of hell, to learn
What 'tis to wrong the heart that trusted thine!"
And, ere his victim uttered curse or prayer,
The shining blade was buried in his breast.

Meantime, the household round the Lady Blanche,
In clamorous grief kept venting their distress,
Save one, within whose arms she now reposed
So freely, in her beauty cold and fair!
Which never more would his fond heart forget,
While it would beat within his aching breast—
The wild despairing breast of Frederick Vaughan!



LOVE AND ART.

"Oh ! Art, my art, thou'rt much, but Love is more."—*Mrs. Browning.*

Two forms still hover in my sight,
On which I bend adoring eyes ;
One syren form is clothed in light,
And one whose robes are mysteries.

One beckons to her temple bright,
On lofty steeps afar and clear ;
Fain would I climb the toilsome height,
But for a still small *Voice* I hear.

'Tis from the mystic form divine ;
And while my steps uncertain turn,
And while those lights ærial shine,
Comes that low *Voice* in words that burn.

"Mount not the steep ! Here in this vale,
Unseen, unknown, with me find rest ;
And from me learn the sweetest tale
That ever mortal senses blest !"

The *Voice* thrills to my inmost soul ;
But now that other form on high
Holds in one hand a burnished scroll,
Where traced are names that never die.

Her other hand holds forth a gem—
Stars pale before its wondrous flame—
“ This be their radiant diadem,
Who dare to climb and trace their name !”

The sparkling gem—the words of fire—
Seemed as though burning in my brain ;
What can my willing feet inspire
To tempt that height, that crown to gain ?

“ Genius,” the mystic *Voice* replied,
“ If by *her* lofty wings ye soar ;
If not—approach the steep’s rough side—
What mean those tears—that reeking gore ?”

Unhallowed sight ! Oh, dear bought prize !
Oh, radiant lustre, fatally shed !
Each step was tracked by blood and sighs,
Wrung from the dying and the dead !

And they who reached those heights sublime,
Oh, mournful sight, 'twas but to die ;
Stars on the pallid brow may shine,
Yet wake no more their ecstasy !

“ Not thus is felt *my* gentle sway,”
The *Voice* again breathed sweet and low ;
“ Forbid thy feet to further stray,
And, *in thy heart*, my light shall glow.”

Blest form, I cried, and magic *Voice*,
My heart shall beat for thee alone ;
New life within wakes to rejoice,
And blend incarnate with thine own !

Teach me thy mystic robes to read ;
Teach me thy witching, soothing lore :
For Art, fair art, is much indeed—
But Love, my love, thou'rt more !
1875.

IMPROMPTU LINES.

THE lines here following were inserted in one of the author's sketches, entitled “A Ramble in Shane's Castle Park,” and published in the *Belfast News-Letter*, of February, 1875.

Shortly after this, we arrive at the ancient and historical burial-place of the great Shane O'Neill, and his friends and

followers. What a sudden revulsion of thoughts and feelings now seize the mind! Everywhere around there was life, harmony, and beauty, from the deer sporting in the slopes beyond, to the musical plashing of the lake below—"parting summer's lingering blooms delayed," indeed; but here the mighty dead reposed, the world forgetting, by the world forgot. Directly to the west of O'Neill's tomb a wonderful ash tree, worthy of its position, and worthy of its contemporaries, stretches its sympathetic shade—an eloquent memorial of the great moral subject at its side. Resting against its trunks—for I counted five, each independent of itself, yet all so curiously intertwined that it was impossible to distinguish the parent stem—the following lines occurred to me as I deciphered the inscription, which recorded what Shane M'Brien, M'Phelim, M'Brien, M'Phelim O'Neill, once was !—

TRAVELLER, when here your steps you turn,
To seek this mighty warrior's urn,
Know 'twas a chief, whose deeds of fame,
Of kingly might and ancient name,
Will shine a part of Erin's glory,
While Erin lives in song or story.
" M'Shane M'Brien, M'Phelim, M'Shane,"
Oft did his vassals the Sassenach tame
With war cry fierce of " The O'Neill !"
And vengeful charge of fire and steel.
Where now the awe-inspiring sound ?—
Lo, falling leaves upon a mound !
Where now the barbarous pomp that graced ?—
A stone with moss and time defaced !

His victories where?—his revels deep?—
All hush'd in one unbroken sleep !
Then, think, such is your kindred fate—
And be thou low, or be thou great,
Be thou vile, or be thou just,
So ends thy mortal part in—dust !

FORGET AND FORGIVE.

I'm going away, away,
Canst thou *forgive*
The stains that on me lay,
And bid me live ?

I'm going away, away,
Canst thou *forget*
Love's all imperial sway,
Since first we met ?

Oh ! if thou hast *forgiven*
Faults I regret !
Till earth has changed to Heaven,
I'll not forget !

TO THE RESCUE.

THERE came a cry to the banks of Seine
Of a scattered host and a bloody plain,
And a fair Queen knelt at Notre Dame
For La Belle France.

Shall he, our Sire, appeal in vain?
Napoleon! No!—that sacred name
Will nerve each arm to win fresh fame
For La Belle France!

Who cherish'd chivalry and art?
Who led in arms the bravest part?
Who never nursed a coward's heart?
La Belle France!

Then charge!—for each dear vale and vine—
For home and altar charge! till Rhine
Shall own its conquered course is thine,
La Belle France!

Charge!—for our hallowed Fleur d'Lis,
Till Bismarck's boors shall routed see
Our watchword's "Death or victory"
For La Belle France!

19th August, 1870.

INVOKING.

WHY do ye tarry, stars of earth?
 "Daisies pied," come back again;
I yearn to hail thy joyous birth,
 And love should never wait in vain.

Come bring the birds, come bring the leaves;
 Spring shall chant her virgin lay,
And bring the swallow to her eaves,
 Bring the sunshine, bring the May!

Spring from the mountain's lofty brow,
 Bud and blow on vale and mead;
Bound by a mystic spell and vow,
 I follow where'er ye lead!

I have sought ye 'mong ruins wild,
 I've sought ye by laughing streams,
Ye blest my life when fortune smiled,
 And when she withheld her beams.

For the sweets in gaudy parterre
 I hold not the golden key,
Mine be the wealth of visions fair!
 And lo! earth added thee!

Then awake, on your mission speed,
Bid laughter follow weeping,
One lesson ye're chartered to read—
“We were not dead, but sleeping!”

Come back again, come back again!
Earth doth for thy advent crave,
And when past all my joy and pain,
Love for love—bloom on my grave!

February, 1872.

BY THE SEA.

ALONE I sit on a sunny strand,
And gaze o'er the placid sea,
Behind lies the landscape, so calm and grand ;
Which is the fairest, water or land,
Silvery waves or daisied lea ?


The sweet soft voice of the ambient air
Breathes love to the aspen tree,
Gay butterflies flit among posies fair,
Violets peep out from their mossy lair,
To woo the honey bee.

The streams glance love to the radiant sun,
As they ripple to the sea ;
Their course, from the spot where first begun,
Shall brightly shine with the smiles they have won,
Till streams shall cease to be !

So ever my heart doth fondly cling
To one o'er those waters blue,
And wildly it throbs, as I long to spring,
With the speed of a bird on its rapid wing,
To give him welcome true !

What a beautiful world, when view'd aright !
On the great Creator's plan—
A planet of love, with its homes so bright,
Studded with gems of the purest light,
Then given in love to man !

From the humblest flower that decks the dells
To the sun that glows above,
All nature unites in a hymn that swells
With glory that ever plainly tells
That the soul of all is love !



INAUGURATION ODE.

*Read by Rev. J. W. Murray, D.D., at the opening of the
People's Park, the gift of Colonel Sir Shafto Adair *
to Ballymena.*

THE time when plenty crowns the smiling year,
And harvest's golden floods of wealth as yet
Nod in the breezes soft, rejoicing all,
A sound of pleasant voices woke me
From the page whose lore I dearly prize—
Chronicles of great deeds and high resolves,
Of heroes' valour and the patriot's fire—
Saying—"Close those dusty records of the past,
And let thy mind artistic now dilate
On virtue yet alive and wed to power."
On which I followed where the people led,
Till past the narrow confines of the town—
When lo ! the landscape, erst familiar, changed !
Wood, lake, and slope, with many a walk among,
Where marshy fen and fields before had spread,
Ere nature learnt to aid her charms with art.
A Park ! a Park !—Its acres wide enclosed,
And worthy any chief or lady's leisure !
There, too, the Knight by whose enchantment sprung
Each rising grace which this young landscape owned.
You knew him by that *presence* which he had—
The soldier in his mien, while on his brow
Was traced the greater name of scholar.

* Now Lord Waveney.

My ideal Knight ! large-hearted, noble !
Rejoicing in another's joy and weal,
Illumed with pleasure at the scene around—
True pleasure—that 'twas his to give away.
O, first of virtues ! sacred philanthropy !
Thy fruits are lovelier far than breath of Spring :
Precious as love's young dream, the light of flowers,
Or aught on earth of lovely or divine !
Could England's Walter Raleigh be forgot ?
Could earth, tho' flung by Atlas on his breast,
Rob us of Peabody ? Oh, no ! no—no !
A brother's love can burst the grave we know,
For love's an incense never grave could bind—
And filial love it was your Park created.

So with the slanting rays of Autumn's sun
Baptising gift and giver, he conveyed
(With every form which could his deed secure)
The Park unto the people. Record it !
In choicest annals register the deed,
That children yet unborn may bless his name
Who gave the student arbours where to muse,
And carve from thought the truths fair science holds ;
Who gave to lovers bowers where to stray,
Renew their vows, and re-live Eden lost ;
Who gave the tired artizan a share
In balm of Spring and Summer's fuller bloom,
With all the secrets of the changing year.

“Vive, vive la guerre !” the hostile nations cry ;
“Long live the olive,” England’s Queen responds ;
But from our hearts’ most grateful love *we* say,
“Long live the name and lineage of ADAIR.”

August, 1870.

HIO JAOET.

FARE-THEE-WELL ! ’tis briefly spoken,
A moment’s breath, a moment’s tone ;
Yet its cold sense warm hearts hath broken,
Or lived to mourn their sunshine gone.

They called thy friendship but a name—
I smiled, relying on thy truth,
And shared thy pride, when tardy fame,
Crown’d the fair promise of thy youth.

And still affection grew with time,
Till yielding to caprice’s power,
You changed to lees the genial wine,
And recreant fled when storms would lower.

I, that for thee, had freely given,
All love could give, or honour claim—
All but my dearest hopes of heaven,
And proved in weal or woe the same !

Ah ! often shall thy wearied brain,
A voice familiar long to hear ;
Was't ever used to soothe thy pain ?
Tell the vain echoes in thine ear !

And ever, too, when summer flowers,
Their gentle fragrance round thee flings,
Thy heart shall learn that fairest bowers,
Can't lull the thoughts thy memory brings.

And yet if fate would partial be,
I'd beg her with my earnest tears,
To aim her keenest darts at me,
And cheer *thy* path, and calm *thy* fears.

But, brand upon thy fickle heart,
These words which ring our friendship's knell ;
While scorn can live, in life we part,
O'er the past, *hic jacet*, and farewell !

COME BACK AGAIN.

WHEN the summer leaves are falling,
Conquered hosts on autumn's plain,
To my mind one thought recalling—
Come to me, come back again !

When night her mystic sable form
Wraps in robes of wind and rain,
Still swells a voice above the storm—
Come to me, come back again !

When the early morn, soft breaking,
Tells me that my dreams were vain,
What's the wish of my awaking?—
Come to me, come back again !

When music in soft rapture stealing,
Lulls the memory of my pain,
I hear thro' all its sweet revealing—
Come to me, come back again !

When happy joy, like April smiling,
Cheers sad heart and tired brain,
Still yearns the wish, past all beguiling—
Come to me, come back again !

What of errors?—they're forgiven !
What of vows?—that love shall reign !
What of scorn?—its chains are riven !—
Come to me, come back again !

•

LINES,

With a bouquet of flowers, presented by a child named Violet Victoria White, to Countess Spencer, while on a visit to the North of Ireland.

I COME in the name of a flower,
Simple and lowly of mien ;
You come in the fulness of power,
Both in the name of our Queen.

I am so small and you so great !
As lovely as good, says fame—
Gracefully steering Erin's State,
While I've—six years, and—my name.

Then take my tiny gift more bright—
'Twill fade, but memory true
Will shrine thee in her halls of light,
While violets smile in blue !

NOTE.— It is gratifying to relate that the amiable Countess afterwards presented the child with her own beautiful portrait, accompanied by one of Earl Spencer.

UNFADING PORTRAITS.

NAY, dearest, paint it not—bootless alike
The art, or artist's skill, howe'er divine ;
For, ever present to my inward sight,
Shrined in the living temple of my heart,

Nearest my God—perhaps *too near* to Him—
I see thee as thou art, and worship thee !

Once, only once—a brief, sad interval—
The purer light of faith, and hope, and trust,
Was shadow'd by a doubt—a dark dread thought,
That swept across my soul as sweeps the tempest
O'er the unfathomed deep. 'Twas this :
I felt a nameless dread, a causeless sense,
An overwhelming fear of rivalry
In thy affections. I could not bear it :
'Twas worse than death to think it possible
That other love than mine could, in thy soul,
Awaken chords of sympathy divine ;
For I had revelled in the joyous bliss,
The deep, mysterious and unshaken sense
Of perfect spirit-unison with thee. *
In that dark hour arose the whisper'd wish
To have thy portraiture—and wherefore, *then ?*
Ah! with the wild desire to gaze on it—
To press it to my lips—to worship it,
Till reason reel'd upon her throne—or else,
With anxious care, to hide it o'er my heart,
Till the last pulse of life had throb'd beneath it.
And memory thus would mirror back the past,
The hallowed past—a vista ever bright,
Pictured with scenes of love and confidence.

Oh, that appalling dread!—that horrid doubt!
Some envious fiend inspir'd the startling thought,
To break the halo of a glorious dream,
And plunge me headlong into wretchedness.

But some good angel pitied—hope returned,
And love, and trust—the old unwavering trust—
Shone o'er my spirit, and dispell'd the gloom
Chaotic from my breast. In that clear light
I saw thee *as thou art*—all that is noble,
All that is faithful, generous, and good—
All the perfection of humanity!

Then, dearest, paint it not—I need it not!
The sacred impress borne upon my heart
Is an *unfading* portrait. *Thou* art there—
Ever diffusing sunshine o'er my soul,
Ever imbuing it with peace and joy,
Ever endowing it with mental wealth
From thy exalted intellect. Ah, yes!
That portrait is my cherished talisman.

SOOTT'S CENTENARY.

WHAT is a hundred years?—a fleet with sails,
Sable as is the pilot grim;
Whose gulf-bound course no welcome beacon hails,
“Lost!” “Lost!” on banners rent and dim.

What is a hundred years?—the tread of feet
Marching, as victors march to home ;
Behind, they leave disaster and defeat, ·
Before, bright garlands beckon, “ come.”

What is a hundred years?—a dusty grave,
Where pride dishonoured weds decay ;
Like hapless corse which each receding wave
Bears seaward from the realms of day.

What is a hundred years?—a fetid shroud
For pompous vault and nameless sod ;
A wail of grief—a shout of joy—a cloud
Portentous as the voice of God.

What is a hundred or a thousand years?—
An urn wherein to shrine his name,
Whose wit our laughter wakes, his pathos, tears,
While time is conquered, won is fame.

A hundred years!—Are as a circling crown
For brows that throbbed with noblest thought,
Till paused the world, by admiration bound,
To ask whose skill the charm had wrought.

A hundred years!—Are but as autumn leaves
Which softly fall upon the lea ;
While his bright words as gathered sheaves,
Rejoice us as the sun, the sea.

A hundred years!—A worn and mitred priest,
Who, standing by the gates of time,
Proclaims a king—and calls to joyous feast,
While bells immortal anthems chime.

A hundred years!—The echo of thy lyre
Sweet bard who drank from Nature's rill,
Dipping thy pen in sweet emotion's fire,
Making each heart responsive thrill.

A hundred years!—'Tis as a sacred vow
By which we're bound, whate'er our lot,
To kiss the cup and shake the laden bough
In memory of our Wizard—Walter Scott.

BALLYMENA, *August*, 1871.

THREE SOENES OF LOVE AND WAR.

SCENE I.

'Twas morn—an Emperor from his palace passed,
Brave were his guards, his banners gay ;
Faithful and shrill the bugle's warning blast,
Prompt were his legions to obey :
They march, old Seine, beyond thy vine-clad banks,
Till forth th' opposing phalanx pours,
And soon in fierce embrace have met their ranks,
And soon the storm of battle roars.

Not mine the hand to paint the gory field,
Or trace stern conflicts' dubious tide :
Enough—fresh trophies graced the German shield,
And the Gaul showed how brave men died.
On England's shores the vanquish'd king sought rest
O, shiver'd lance!—O, fallen star!—
But a fair queen clung to the exile's breast,
In deathless love, unquench'd by war.

SCENE II.

'Twas noon—the leader of a column spied
A grove with many a 'vantage good ;
Nor yet the ambush'd foe has he descried
Till rang his words—" secure the wood !"
And one, the foremost in that charge of slaughter,
With heart which for promotion burn'd,
Hears a faint piteous cry for " Water ! water !"
And, breaking from his comrades, turn'd :

To raise the drooping head, to share his flask—
Even with his foe!—a moment's deed ;
But as his hand perform'd its generous task,
A ball with fatal aim doth speed !
And they—in battle foes!—as brothers died ;
The Frank, from his Rhine-land afar,
Promotion obtained in the mansions wide,
Where love is the rule—not war !

SCENE III.

'Twas eve—the carnage still cumber'd the plain,
Ghastly in twilight's fitful gleams;
Sad, sad, as the eyes that watched for the slain,
But shall see them only in dreams.
When, lo! a girl's form 'mid the shadows is seen—
So searching and wistful her eyes;
Calm, oh! strangely calm, her face and mien—
No word she breathes—no tears, no sighs.

Onward, still gently onward, thro' the dead,
Nor paused till by one young and fair
She knelt; on her breast she pillow'd the head,
And kissed the brow, and smoothed the hair;
But the anguish'd heart could no longer hold—
On her corse shone the evening star,
And peaceful they slept, 'neath the moonbeams cold,
In love, made immortal by war!

GRANDPAPA'S CHRISTMAS SALUTE.

THE snow wrapped old earth in a shroud,
And never a flower was seen;
Above, cloud hung upon cloud;
Below, 'twas invisible green.

Lily next, with her chalice of gold—
So sweet that for love the zephyrs sigh'd ;
Crystal petals, fold upon fold—
What emblem so pure for my bride ?

Forget-me-nots, and pansies too,
With a spray of white heath bells,
Gay with blossoms and fresh with dew—
Æolian strains from their fairy cells !

Leaves, green leaves, to twine in her hair,
Tiny buds to nestle among—
For a bird in that garden fair
Of little buds sang me a song.

* * * * *

Soft rapture, warm radiance of June,
O sweetness of Summer distill'd !
As her vision is feasted with bloom,
Her heart with thy gladness be fill'd !

28th June, 1872.

THE IDYL OF AN ATTIO.

BUDS and leaves, and giant trees,
Bosky dells and talking brooks ;
A blue sky, and a southern breeze—
How tired I am of books !

O Nature, mother divine !

Ever bright be thy precincts green !
And Art, thy handmaid, shall entwine,
A wreath for thy brow serene.

O mother, my light, my life !

Thou voice of Heaven above,
I have fainted in the strife—
I would bask in the sun of thy love.

Thy winter was all too tragic ;

Come, open the gates of day ;
Charm with the lyric magic,
That you teach Aprillis and Mai.*

Come bring me thy favours fair ;

Come smile and bid all be light ;
Lead thro' the hawthorn scented air,
And o'er seas of daisies white.

Con amore, I follow ;—but hark !

From the blue expanse rings clear
A swell of joy from a lark,
One wild sweet burst—"she is here !"

The echoes hang o'er the stream,

Till dance the ferns on its breast ;
Blue-bells awake from their dream,
Violets peep out from their nest !

* Ancient names of April and May.

And the jewelled robe of green
 Has illumined the forest's shade ;
 Oaks gravely bow to their queen
 As her train sweeps thro' the glade.
 O lark, sing thy anthem again ;
 I'm clasped to my mother's breast—
 And tell in thy mystic strain
 Of my ecstasy of rest !
 But what is that hiding there—
 A romantic little fay ?
 A gem of tint so pure—so rare—
 Or a star that has lost its way ?
 * * * *
 Ha, ha ! Miss Primrose, you're caught !
 But soft—is this really a glen ?
 And where are the flowers I sought ?—
 But a dream in my attic "den !"

February, 1874.

SOUVENIR.

*Lord Waveney's Entertainment of the Wives and Children of
 Tenantry, at Clinty, 18th August, 1874.*

"DRINK to me only with thine eyes,"
 Exclaimed the bard, more gay than wise ;
 Drink to me deep in sparkling wine,
 Cried ancient hosts at Bacchus' shrine ;

Drink *not*—cry anchoritish elves,
Nor laugh, but fast and castigate yourselves !
Where is the happy medium, ask we ?—
We've found it, and we have it in our *tea* !
Then drink to him who is your honest boast—
Whether as landlord, or as graceful host ;
In whom each happy virtue seems to blend,
The Christian, Patriot, Scholar, and your Friend.
Then wish him length of years and sweet repose,
Beloved, and happy as the breeze that blows,
Long, long enjoying all he now bestows !

* * *

So sip the cup, whilst genial hours roll,
In feasts of pleasure, and “in flow of soul !”

ON A CHILD WHO DIED ON HIS FIRST BIRTH-DAY.

“ Sweet flower, with flowers we strew thy narrow bed—
Sweets to the sweet—Farewell ! ”

FAIR summer day, eventful date
Of all *my* records under heaven :
Do laws divine combine with fate ?—
To us, this day, a son was given.

I bless'd the day ; I wrote thy name—
A mother's anguish yields to joy :
Love rules the court and camp the same—
Heir of true love, my first-born boy !

Of all thy infant winning ways,
Light of our home, I may not dwell ;
My heart will register those days,
Though every memory sound a knell.

Once more returns thy natal day,
When, lo ! a message comes again—
Perhaps we halted by the way,
And let His signals point in vain.

Now, plain and clear, the mandate's given—
One year for us—God's evermore :
Life of my life, return to Heaven !—
Faith grant to Love wings thus to soar.

TRANSPLANTED.

THERE came one day a tiny guest
To me, and nestled in my breast,
As would a dove that found her nest.

'TWAS in the sunny May it came,
THIS little guest without a name—
Yet all allowed its helpless claim.

And never yet the bird or flower
That sang on spray, or bloomed in bower,
To wake my love had such true power.

One day we dressed it all in white,
Pure as a pearl that's softly bright,
Yet warm with precious life and light.

Then to my heart the treasure pressing,
And still with many a fond caressing
We gave a name—the church its blessing.

With her fair growth all fair things grew,
And smiles from wondrous eyes of blue,
Taught me how Summer o'er us flew.

But when the leaves that Spring had spread
Were brown and spent, and toss'd and dead,
My little guest, too, drooped her head.

I kissed her o'er and o'er again
Through tears that fell the while like rain—
Alas, that love must live with pain!

O Summer, hers, for ever flown!
O light that in our household shone!
O leaden grief—my guest is gone!

October, 1874.

DAY DREAMS.

The following lines were prepared for publication at a time when the writer was concerned for the welfare of the interesting little orphans, resident in this neighbourhood, who are now happily provided for in a suitable Orphanage :-

O LIFE ! O Love !—this Winter night
What store of visions, warm and bright,
Canst thou unfold—while sweeps the gale
In vengeful wrath o'er wood and dale,
And tempests rage, sublimely grand,
Till swells the ocean, quakes the land,
Let Winter reign ; the hoary King
Shall find me happy as the Spring.
If while he reigns, sweet home, outside,
Within, my darling friend and guide,
Gay Fancy dwells, with mystic charms,
Which stern reality disarms.
Fancy ! the ever friendly shade,
Who still in roseate robe arrayed,
Oft paused, on airy pinions light,
To gild my path with visions bright,
And 'mid my briars garlands flung,
And o'er my ruins ivy hung—
Desert me not, O Queen, divine !
As I am thine, so thou be mine.
Invoked, no goddess could withstand ;
She poised her wings, she waved her wand,

And straight before my wondering view
There rose what now I'll paint for you.

Methought 'twas moonlight, and I strayed
Within a dell's deep leafy shade,
Where wild flowers, as beloved as sweet,
Shone in my path, sprang round my feet ;
And founts their showers pour'd in song,
While echoes soft the strains prolong,
Till memory's register of care
Was lost in the soft starlight there.
'Twas strangely beautiful !—but cold,
As snowdrops which from graves unfold ;
When, dearer far, one single tear
Dropt by affection on the bier,
Than sculptured stone, or floral wreath,
Or all the gorgeousness of death !

And so my fancy, quick to rove,
Sketched a new scene of life, with love :—
A scene of childhood's happy mirth,
Of radiant joy around the hearth ;
Their fairy laughter rippling sweet,
And set to music by their feet.
Three buds in different stages blowing—
Three types of different beauty showing :
The first, with pensive hazel eyes,
Sought all things in a shy surprise ;
Fragile she was, but dainty fair,

Like aureole gleamed her sunny hair.
Her sisters ruddier beauty nursed,
Yet none were dearer than the first ;
Their blue eyes from silk lashes beamed,
Curls nut-brown o'er their shoulders streamed ;
Downy cheeks like peaches glowed,
Red lips in lisping accents flowed,
With all the thousand nameless graces
Which lit the trio's happy faces.
Their beauty burst my fancy's spell—
But how can joy her gladness tell ;
As, waking from a dream that blesses,
A dearer sense the soul caresses ;
How speak the ecstasy to know
Their founts of life from mine did flow,
As, rushing from all dreams apart,
I strained them to my eager heart,
And learned that never Heaven above
Forged chains so strong as mother's love !

Again my mood was changed, and sad
My spirit grew, so lately glad.
A gloomy prescience o'er me hung,
Which chilled my heart and stayed my tongue ;
As, following where my fancy led,
There op'ed a chamber of the dead ;
And in the dim light, round the bier,
Three children stood, all dazed with fear--

Nor grief, nor loss, could understand—
They could but gaze, hand clasped in hand !
If ever souls, in realms of bliss,
Could see the woes endured in this,
Well might their mother's long to break
From spirit spheres for their dear sake !
To bless them, kiss away their fears
With angel's love, with mortal's tears.
Orphan'd !—henceforth to drift thro' earth,
As leaves from boughs which gave them birth ;
And find, in place of bread, a stone
To rest their naked heads upon !
Sad, say you, is my pictured theme—
Would that it were indeed a dream !
A dream from which all clouds had passed,
And hope and gladness dawned at last.
Like angels, 'neath whose wings of light,
The orphans folded warm and bright,
Shall by your bounty learn to prove
Their young lives checked with threads of love !

1st December, 1872.



THE ROSE AND SHAMROCK.

FROM English bowers came the rose,
The peerless emblem of its land;
On palace walls its beauty glows,
Round cottage homes its odour's fanned.

From Erin's sod the shamrock springs,
Her emblem, blest by bard and saint;
Still lovely 'mong all lovely things—
What words that emerald gem could paint?

But when the rose's matchless grace,
Doth with the triple leaves entwine,
Lo! beauty past all art to trace,
And faith and love in bond divine!

TRIBUTE.

THOU Empress loved, whose graceful hand
Has deck'd, but now, thy Traveller's bier,
Receive from one of his dear land
Love's tribute—love casts out my fear!

* * * * *

Home they brought thy Traveller, dead ;
To Heaven alone doth England yield—
Long 'neath its skies thy banners spread,
Victoria of the stainless shield !

Long may we of thy land delight
To own thy sway of Peace serene ;
In victory's smiles, in sorrow's night,
We find a *woman* in our Queen.

Love teacheth Loyalty its lore,
What can their mystic zeal withstand?
By them thy Livingstones explore—
They nerve a Wolseley's dauntless band.

Who dares to carp of bygone days?
Who dares write "past" on valour's page,
And impious mutilate the bays
That grace our own Victorian age ?

Within the Abbey's sacred pile
A greater name is owned by none
Than his, that lives while flows the Nile,
True Spartan, fearless Livingstone !

He bore two lamps, whose lustre rare
Enwrapped him in their halo bright ;
Thro' trackless wastes, 'neath palm trees fair,
They shone for Truth, they burned for Right.

Still onwards with those shining lamps,
He tamed the savage, taught the rude,
O'er scorching sands, by noisome swamps—
The majesty of being good !

No higher mission man was given
Than this, to elevate his kind ;
Worthy his knighthood high in Heaven,
Who let none lower fill his mind.

For grandly human was the aim
Which still his breast heroic fired ;
Man had no lesser creed or claim
Than freeman, by the truth inspired.

And we are richer by his life,
Ennobled more that thus he died,
Than all the conquest in the strife
By which rebellion is defied.

Then, grateful Albion, carve his name,
Proud Scotia, chronicle his birth ;
This nursed her hardy son for fame,
That reverently gave earth to earth !

April 23, 1874.

A WELCOME.

From the Children of Guy's School to Lady Adair.

“BE merry, but do nothing wrong :”

Let this be our motto to-day ;
She comes !—and we hail her with song—
Our gentle, beneficent Fay.

’Tis said that the fairies have fled,
Far, far away over the sea ;
Pray, tell me, then, who has here spread
This feast for small people like me ?

Oh, mention it soft as a prayer—
For angels such whispers can tell ;
Her name, learn, is LADY ADAIR,
Who does all her spiriting well.

For her castle of ancient style,
And rich as a castle should,
Possesses no art to beguile
From that luxury—doing good.

And still as the season comes round,
In sunshine, in snow, or in rain,
Our voices with joy shall resound
To welcome her back again.

LINES .

*Sent with a cushion to Mr. Herbison, of Dunclug, better known
as "The Burn's of Ireland."*

Go, cushion, to a poet's head—
Be thine to bring repose !
When all the nymphs and swains have fled,
To which his gallant fancy's wed,
And left him room for mortal woes.

Bring thoughts as happy as the streams
That babble thro' his lays,
And bright as his own early dreams,
And warm as Heaven's genial beams,
The love that cheers his waning days.

Good Friday, 1874.

EXTEMPORE LINES TO "IDA,"

On receiving from her a Cushion for my Chair while in sickness.

A CUSHION for a poet,
Made of down and feathers fair ;
Every one around should know it
Has for him a thought of care.

I will sit and muse upon it,
In the balmy breath of Spring ;
Sing my songlet or my sonnet ;
And be happy while I sing.

Health to her who kindly gave it
As a seat of rest to me ;
For her sake I'll strive to save it
From the moth's voracity.

She shall have it for my blessing,
While I live to breath a prayer
That her joys may never lessen—
Heaven keep her in thy care !

May she always find a pleasure
In the path she loves to go ;
May she never want for treasure,
To assuage her poet's woe.

May her fame be like the flower
That adorns the hawthorn tree ;
May she pass life's every hour
From corroding sorrow free.

D. HERBISON.

Sunday Morning, April 5th, 1874.

THE OMNIUM GATHERUM.

THE "Omnium Gatherum," a book, was contributed by the author, in aid of a Bazaar, where it was disposed of for £7 18s. It contained a great variety of matter both in prose and verse. Every page is embellished with flowers, ferns, portraits, or artistic designs; and the compilations comprised sundry interesting quotations of humour, romance, and moral sentiment. The book opened with the following original lines, written within a border of very beautiful flowers, and entitled—

IDA'S PROLOGUE.

An "Omnium Gatherum" is before you laid,
In which most varied gleanings are displayed :
For true it is—"tho' pity 'tis 'twere true"—
Your artiste lets caprice her taste imbue ;
And so in most eccentric order places
Fun, morals, poetry, with facts and faces—
Wit, music, botany—O, compound strange !
But stay—my fancy, ever quick to range,
Already sees some gentle (?) critic sneer,
And lisp as verdict—"How grotesque—how queer !"
Granted, my dear ; yet hear my humble plea,
To exile *ennui*—that blue d——, *ennui*,
To speed the passing moment, and to show
I wish'd you success—could but wit bestow !

ERIN'S TRIBUTE.

" Shall I not sing of thee ! my own, my mountain land, of thee !
Ah ! dearer far because within thy rest I may not be !"

ON all broad history's page I find one land,
One race, in native worth unrivalled.
Serene in adverse days, in prosperous, pure ;
In arms illustrious, in their vigour proud ;
A land of patriots true, of martyrs bold.
Tried—sternly tried—but never wanting found :
A land of heroes and of bards, whose lays
Are tribute meet to high heroic deeds.
Thou, Scotia ! Caledonia ! art that land !
Supremely noble, and supremely great !
Dear land of purple mountains, and of lakes,
Than fancy's fair creations lovelier far,
Of shim'ring gems, by giant rocks o'ershadowed,
And margin'd round by fern, blue-bell, and heath.
O heath, wild heath, a thousand times beloved !
How memory wakes to rapture at thy name !
Till marshalled forth from out the sombre past,
Stand forms whose names still keep thee holy ground.

Proud land of Bruce !

Despite the centuries' flight, we see him still
In more than regal majesty arrayed ;
For his pure zeal and his undaunted soul,
Enshrined in noblest, highest, type of man,

Proclaimed him on the rugged heath—a King.
How could insignia more right royal be ?

Chief of a long, bold line, I next behold ;
In peace his sovereign's friend, in war his shield,
As true, as brave, and chivalrous as true.
The Bruce's dying charge the chief must bear—
A holy charge the Bruce's heart to shrine,
And in crusade, 'gainst unbelieving Moor,
The relic bear. Oh, knight ! oh, Spartan knight !
How thrills thy deathless words thro' circling years
As in war's vortex, death redeemed thy vow !
“ Pass first in fight ; as thou wert wont to do :
I follow thee—or die as Douglas ought ! ”

Back, memory, back, to freedom's home again,
For freedom was the star whose light they loved
Dear as their winding glens, in summer's pride.
Never a broomy knowe but keeps the tale
Of strife and victory for its sacred cause ;
Not a brown flood that bursts from mountain side
But bore the word to ocean on its breast ;
For Rome's Horatius, proudly Tiber flow :
Is there a pass or ford in Scotia's land
Has not defied its foes with such a guard ?
How fondly fancy dwells on the bright ranks
Who swell the scroll of fame, from Wallace brave,
To the great hearts who gave us Flodden field.

Still on, my fancy leads, till o'er her dreams

A shadow falls, and from the heath bursts shrill—
“Claymore!” “Claymore!”—a fearless chieftain’s cry—
The chief who greatly lived, and nobly died.
O winds! Lochiel’s requiem ever chant,
Nor let the burthen be Cullodon Moor!
What ancient pain that word can bid arise!
A wounded land, a prince beloved, exiled—
But thrice beloved, when fickle fortune waned.
Calm might he sleep in pass, or glen, or cave,
When love was sentry, gold allured in vain,
For nature stronger is than law, we know;
And though the fortunes of a distant day
Can make us heirs of sorrow, or of joy,
Still can devotion soothe, still can love bless,
While thrones exist, and when they cease to be.

On “down the ringing grooves of change” we come
While happier, calmer, scenes our being moulds,
As ’neath the brooding wings of halcyon peace,
Art builds her home, and works her magic will,
And thought, great empress, wider empire sways.
And so the mighty Present opes her page,
While sounds more jubliant than streams in June,
Come trilling o’er, from isle to sister isle.

’Tis the sound of marriage bells!
Of bells that chime their ever welcome peals
For a dear daughter of the sea-girt Isles—
For Louise—fairest of the Brunswick line.

Upon her placid brow compassion sits,
While her soft eyes love's language only knows,
And by her side stands ancient Scotia's son,
Whose birth and mien doth well the honour grace ;
And forth to meet her comes a plaided clan
From far Lochawe, where foe could never reach.
They come with pibroch, o'er the Border come,
Not with their war-cry—"Campbells on the foe!"
But "Welcome, Louise!" and "Hail, bride of Lorne!"
"Louise and Lorne!" we all of us respond,
For all are Campbells, in their love to her
Whose love doth Rose and Thistle blend, whose love
Old feuds inter, and seals by sacred vows
A nearer, dearer, union of our Isles.

And thou, too, Music! wake! give soul to song,
Break into strains for happy hearts to sing,
Bid Louise welcome to her Highland Home.

6th March, 1871.

SHE SLEEPS.

SHE sleeps—lay blossoms on her breast,
And dew them with thy tears the while,
Tho' all too deep, her slumbering rest,
To give thee back one answering smile!

Gentle and pure in life as death,
What meeter emblems could we give?
Both faded with her fading breath,
Both beautiful in memory live!

She sleeps—far from the reach of grief,
Or pain, or care, her rest to mar,
Strew flowers, oh, love! for life is brief,
Then upward look—behold a star!


16th December, 1872.

PROLOGUE.

*(Theatrical Entertainment, in aid of the Ballymena Coal Fund,
13th May, 1875.)*

“FRIENDS, Romans, hear me!” asked one known to
Friends, I repeat—because no dearer name [fame;
Could hear, or hearing answer when we call—
Applaud our success or deplore our fall.
But there are friends, and friends—I see you know it—
Those who but talk their friendship, *these* who show it;
Those who but lend their finger-tips to say
Their shallow nothings—“rather cold to-day!”
These in whose cordial grasp and genial hand
We need no “Medium’s” aid to understand
That our emotions, trials, and desire,
Find in their breasts a sympathetic fire—

Yet friendship never carelessly extends
To strangers what she only owes to friends.
Your sympathy we ask—that spark to bind
In true vibration mind to kindred mind ;
Which moves the generous tear, and bids it flow
For wrongs and griefs, which others only know ;
But if withheld—this warm ethereal strain—
We weep, we laugh—and Shakspeare taught in vain.
Not all the efforts of the Tragic Muse,
Not all the wit the Comic could infuse,
Can give the play the force, the tone, the fire,
Which your applause would quicken and inspire.
Then, in the name of every magic part
Which our great Master pictured from the heart,
Yield us the crown which honest Art demands ;
Give us your spirits, presence, and your hands ;
Your smiles our sunshine is—your laughter, wine—
We point a moral, you improve the time.
When virtue's injured on our mimic stage,
Stamp the injustice with your honest rage ;
When vice is punished, add your verdict too—
We hold but Nature's mirror up to view ;
When murderers, haunted by that spectre, fear,
See ghosts at feasts, when "*spirits*" should appear,
The horror tingling through your guiltless veins
Is moral health, and guerdon for our pains ;
And when our lovers, in all moods of folly,



Mad with their joys—or mad with melancholy—
Enraptured Juliet—or Romeo in despair—
Are thrill'd with transports, you these transports share;
All, all await the envious curtain's rise,
To win your courtesy and feast your eyes.
My mission's ended;—Lo! before you stands
The guardians of the night, at your command,
Needing no further herald to proclaim
The honours which surround their *song-won* fame:
But if fine gold improves in clearer light,
Call him the ever piquant and the bright— *
[Who tells, as you know, of one "Widdy Malone,"
Until he has made more than "Widdys" his own;]—
While PROLOGUE, in the kindest of farewells,
Leaves you to gayer scenes and softer spells.

A SPRING REVERIE.

THE sunshine of the Spring, with gentle breath,
Hath wafted to my heart a genial ray;
And thoughts of bye-gone Springs, and Summers too,
Flit o'er my soul with all their lights and shades :
For human passions, with the passing years,
Some sorrow mingled with my love and joy,
And April-like, far as my life has gone,

* In allusion to a popular amateur singer of the town.

I've laughed and wept, and pray'd and err'd, by turns.
But for to-day, at this old tree's gnarl'd roots,
Like mariner I'll lie and here survey,
In seaman's phrase, the log-book of my life.

* * * * *

And there they flit and pass like conjured ghosts,
All unreluctant an account to yield,
Of scenes "lang syne" interred—but not forgot.
Back to your cells in memory, phantoms past ;
I will not herald you to curious eyes—
The love ye brought was all too deep for words,
And with thy sorrows strangers meddle not.
So back, ye heart-aches, let the sunshine in !
The sky's broad arch shines blue above my head,
Primroses sermonise upon the grass,
And violets, charged humility to teach,'
Peep from the moss with radiant beauty crowned.
Aye, there ye bloom, dear blossoms of my love,
Bright as of old, when urn'd within your leaves
My riches lay ; and when your haunts were found,
Spell-bound I stood, thy worship in my heart,
Faithful to thee as Druid 'neath his oak.

So I dream on : the wood's deep voice around,
Earth's wondrous loveliness before me spread,
I could forget a Paradise was lost !

But, o'er the sward, who comes with ringing laugh,
And dainty steps that scarce the dew-drops brush ?
Answer, my heart, for quicker did ye beat.
'Tis she, my first-born ! golden-haired and bright,
Dear as the Spring, and lovely as the morn ;
And as her eye's bright glance a flower espies,
In ecstasy she bounds its stem to grasp :
Oh flowers ! for ever blow around her feet,
And in her heart may it be always Spring !

Again, a joyous dimpled face I see,
Wonder and dawning wisdom in her eyes—
Clear, placid, innocent. With arms outstretched,
And tottering steps, the wished-for point she gains.
Her joys and griefs the present hour bounds ;
And when those tiny fingers clasp a flower,
Down sits she on the grass, and, spendthrift-like,
Tears all to shreds. Alas ! my dark-eyed Maude,
How much I fear 'tis so with other folks,
Who sometimes lightly love what once they prized.

So I dream on, and fancy shifts the scene :
Cradled in calm repose, a babe I see,
Whose gentle beauty fills my soul with dread.
On her broad brow unwritten lore I trace,
But tremble lest my Ethel's life be frail.
Back, back ye heart-aches, let the sunshine in !

These flowers in fragile beauty grow—yet live,
And Heaven—who lent the azure to her eyes—
Can gauge my strength, and spare the precious child.

So I muse on, while skies are not o'ercast :
A stately ship, on distant coast I see,
Daring old ocean's storms alone, and brave,
Like some good life amid temptation strong.
On her smooth deck a well-known face I scan,
Mirror of all that's faithful, loving, fair !
Oh, winds, forget to rage, and sleep ye waves ;
I would nought ruder than the zephyr's play
That barque assail, till safe in friendly port
I grasp her hand, and feel for once again,
My weary longing for her signal's o'er,
And Marian's come to cheer me with her love.

My day-dream o'er, I wake, as dreamers must,
Perchance to other calls than bud and leaf ;
But ere I leave thy grateful shade, old tree,
From out the deep joy of my heart I bless
Nature (to me my mother, nurse, and friend),
For all her sunshine, harmony, and love.



WHILE engaged compiling my "OMNIUM," I was much gratified by receiving from Earl Dufferin a small profile portrait of himself. After framing it with ivy leaves, I placed above his family motto (*Per vias rectas*), a group of water-lillies. I then dashed off the lines here subjoined, at a speed which is but too apparent, for which I crave his lordship's and every one's pardon.

A CARTE in the letter !—I break the seal,
And my eager eyes at a glance reveal
All that is told in thy contour profile.

A delicate tone, with a youthful grace
As of pensive power, prevails in the face—
Connoisseurs call the look, "training and race."

'Neath an arching brow, a half dreamy eye,
A mouth that assures you a gentle reply—
Fine as if nature with art did vie.

To be one of my gathered leaves it came,
Though known to the world by a nobler fame
Than herald's motto or ancient name.

Well, I'll frame it in leaves : its mimic bower
Of ivy shall be—*I stoop not to power*—
And, for well known crest, one simple flower.

October, 1871.

TO "IDA'S" HARP.

(Addressed to "Ida" of Ballymena, by an Ulster Emigrant in Canada).

O MYSTIC, magic, wondrous Harp !
How new, how strangely sweet thy tone,
When touched by that fair lady's hand
We all rejoice to call our own.

Each patriot heart from far and near,
Lovers of poesy and song,
Delighted, lend attentive ear,
Whilst thou the witching notes prolong.

Wake you to praise a Livingstone—
Britain's loved Queen may claim your powers ;
The song was to the Empire given,
But Ida and her Harp are ours.

Pity it e'er should silent be,
Or idly hang against the wall,
While other cares call clamourously,
And Ida answers to the call.

O Ida, take that Harp once more—
The Harp thy hand can tune so well ;
And many a heart on distant shore
Responsive to the notes shall swell.

Yes, touch again the trembling string,
And sing of Ulster hills, "*machree*;"
Then please to write the song with care,
And send it o'er the deep to me.

For who hath seen my native land,
But parted from its shores with pain ;—
Or heard the Harp in Ida's hand,
But wished to hear it oft again !

M. E. Parsonage House,
Cremore, Ontario, *August*, 1874.

THE ROMANCE OF THE HARP.

(*Dedicated to Canada.*)

O HARP! my Harp they bid thee wake,
And touch again thy chords with gladness;
From grief's lethargic dreams to break,
Nor in thy song breathe of thy sadness.

O Harp! neglected and unstrung,
Let generous praise thy silence thrill ;
And, friendly garlands round thee flung,
Awake again thy minstrel skill.

And first, my Harp, thy numbers tell
Of our brief youth, unknown to care,
When Fancy on thy chords would dwell,
And love would list and linger there ;

And tell of one, in that glad time,
Whose distant halo still is glowing,
Who from her own great love sublime
Taught the dear love from friendship flowing.

Who in a deep devotion rare
On all my steps and ways still hung,
In all my joys and griefs had share,
Till round her own my spirit clung.

Soft auburn hair and eyes of blue,
And happy voice for ever gay,
A joyous nature, frank and true,
Dispelling care and grief away,

So closely knit was heart with heart,
In all the strength of those young years,
The thought that we should ever part,
Ne'er rose to quench us with its fears.

Nor shadow of the time to come
That held for me such bitter pain,
When she would lie so calm and dumb,
And I would wildly call in vain !

The eyes that still to me revealed
Their sacred light of truth and faith,
To all my anguish now so sealed—
O mortal love ! O conquering death !

How can I speak of my despair,
Or how to share her death I craved;
The earth made empty ruins where
The flowers as funereal emblems waved.

And I beside them dumbly strayed,
As one who had no business there;
One thought alone emotion swayed—
Her hands once wreathed them in my hair.

Through haunts where we together roved,
I wandered in the starry night,
And burning tears, for her I loved,
Fell numerous as that host of light!

I wandered by leaf-shaded streams—
Her voice seem'd ever whispering there,
While blent amid my fancy's dreams,
The sunny eyes, the auburn hair!

And thou, my Harp, in that dread time,
When death had thus my path benighted,
Grew dearer, for thy voice sublime
Still breathed upon my spirit blighted.

And oft a low and soothing dirge,
Thy chords have swept to solace me,
The softened echoes of that surge
Which drown'd thine own wild ecstasy!

Now what to me, though wayward fame
Its meteor flash upon us shone ;
Like some rare gem's uncertain flame,
While yet we gaze, its light is gone !

Yet dearer are thy plaintive strains,
Evoked by my too careless hand,
That they are hailed on distant plains,
We claim as our own sister land.

I love the land—from him who sways,*
To him who toils with strong brown hands ;
For Nature her own voice obeys
That binds us thus in mystic bands.

There wanderers, from our own sweet Isle,
Still found the welcome light of home ;
And Bounty, with her cheerful smile,
Won hearts that never idly roam.

Then forth, my Harp, those exiles seek,
Who list thy song with patriot fires ;
And let thy grateful measures speak
The kindred love my breast inspires.

1874.

* Earl Dufferin, Governor-General of Canada.

FOUND DEAD.

[The following lines were suggested to the writer on reading an account of a woman, of lady-like appearance, found dead in the neighbourhood of Drury Lane, London, with a few faded violets on her lap.]

My dear, dear loves, farewell !—within my heart,
Since first it knew emotion, ye had part—
Yea, in my heart of hearts one spot was true,
And sacred still—a spot no autumn knew ;
And there ye bloomed, in one unbroken spring,
Lovely and loved, hallowed and hallowing !

With violets life began, so let it end ;
Would that no baser ties had power to blend
With love so pure, with beauty so divine,
As kindled in this breast thy life-long shrine.
Wild violets, clasped within my wasted hands,
What mystic spells your presence here commands !
Reviving all the pleasure, all the pain,
My life has known,—but ne'er can know again.
My life !—the veriest shadow of a shade,
Where hope deluded, and where love decayed ;
At morn they launched me 'neath their pennons bright,
Like some gay barque that thus goes down in night.
Give back my kisses, flowers, tho' your breath
May not delay the onward march of death ;
But backward ye can lead, while memory bright
Can trace the haunts where first ye bless'd my sight.

Hush'd is the city's din ; in space afar,
Reigning in lonely splendour, one bright star !
Cold, silent sentinel, didst ever shed
Thy lustre on a more deserted head ?
Not one to seek me, 'mid the crowds that spurn :
Oh, memory's violet-days to thee I turn !
Give back the opening bud, the shady fern,
Beside whose waving fronds I could discern
Thy blossoms blue, earth's special, tender care,
Her sweetest of the sweet, her fairest fair !
Give back the mossy banks, with willows hung,
Where early sunshine and soft shadows flung
Their charms fantastic round me as a spell,
Soft as thy blossoms, fairies of the dell !
Ah ! now I hear the tinkling of a stream,
Uncertain, soft, like sounds borne in a dream ;
I see the flowers upon its margin growing,
My village stream still onward purely flowing !
I've watched it mirror back a thousand sprays,
I've heard it sing a thousand happy lays ;
Immortal poet thou, bright woodland river,
Thy rustic song with garlands crown'd for ever !

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How dark it grows !—yet still that star above
Shines softly bright—oh, is thy message *love* ?
And love *for me*, from thy bright source divine,

Which taught the stream to sing and thee to shine ;
 Thou pointest, midst this gloom, the path to heaven—
 Hast thou no voice to whisper me—Forgiven ?
 O vision, dearer for that one bright ray,
 Depart not yet, nor turn thy light away,
 Then not all dark, this lullaby to rest—
 Weary and stained, but violets on my breast.

* * * * *

Morn came ; and one more city record said
 Its cruel say—in two short words—"Found dead!"

1874.

NATURE.

(From the Tyndall Standpoint.)

MOTHER of all—my being, life, and light !
 Answer thy child, who yearning turns to thee ;
 Answer my soul, for soul I know *is* mine,
 Whate'er its destiny hereafter be—
 Speak from the depths of philosophic lore,
 What is that complex being called myself ?
 Life of my Life, impartial Mother mine,
 Thee have I sought from "morn to dewy eve,"
 Aye, until night her starry splendours flung
 Above my gaze, in reverent wonder fix'd ;

And ever as I gazed would this my soul,
This thing of reverence and of love divine,
Ascend, in rapture lost, far, far beyond
Where constellations mark the milky way,
And seek at once its essence and its shrine !
Oh Mother ! beautiful in calm or storm,
By smiling lake, or angry sea reflected,
Whether thou speak'st in cataracts or streams,
From glacial peaks, or forests waving wide,
It still was *thee*—and all my willing mind
Obeyed the sweet necessity to love,
To worship, to adore—not gems of earth,
Nor radiant worlds above, but the true source
Which gave to them, thro' thee, direction, life.
Oh, sovereign parent ! Alchemist sublime !
Leave not my soul within the chaos dark
Whence all things came ; but forward, onward, lead,
From where the tribute daisies deck thy feet,
To heights profound, where stored thy secrets lie,
If in that wondrous labyrinth I may learn
That thou both Mother and *Creator* art.

From germ to growth, to beauty from that growth,
On, on, to true perfection, thee I trace,
Victorious march ! with Order in thy van,
Until my soul, alternate pleased and awed,
Pauses to seek for that which thee could bound.

Above! Below! Beyond those shining worlds
 Has't fix'd thy limits?—Art thou there dissolv'd
 In one grand First and Universal Cause?
 Reveal, reveal, in one all certain light
 The light of Science, and the light of Truth,
 Which is the light and climax of the worlds!

* * * * *

Then if I am thy work, and thine *alone*,
 All *disinherited*, behold I yield
 Time, Space, Infinity, and Heaven itself,
 My sacred aspirations and my hopes
 To earth, to earth! and 'mid their ruins stand
 Beneath the stars, with no bright home beyond,
 The tenant and the wanderer of a day!

August, 1874.

IN acknowledgment of my lines on "Nature," it was my great pleasure to receive, among many others, the following tribute from one whom I trust a grateful posterity will enrol among the highest intellects of the present day:—

"Royal Institution of Great Britain,
 14th December, 1874.

"DEAR MADAM,—I thank you much for the very beautiful lines on Nature which you have been good enough to send me. The "disinheriting" is sure to be made good in some way to him on whom the penalty has fallen because of his loyalty to the truth.—I am, dear madam, yours faithfully,

"JOHN TYNDALL."

FAYS AND FERNS.

*(Written after a visit to Lady O'Neill's Fernery, at
Shane's Castle Park.)*

"THEY grew in beauty side by side,—
To see them was to fall in love ;
Before them flowed the lake's calm tide,
Behind them sprung a guardian grove.

Of haunted homes, enchanted lakes,
No doubt you've heard in idle tale ;
Knights spell-bound for their true loves' sakes,
And then unbound more knights to quail.

But now I'll tell of lovely fays—
For fairer forms ne'er warrior fought,
Nor poet wove within his lays,
Nor painter to his pencil taught.

And some were tiny, some were tall,
But all were robed in freshest green ;
The splendours of a court or hall
In vain had vied with that bright scene.

They led me through their choicest bowers,
And onwards where their fountains play,
To gay festoons of rarest flowers
That shyly drooped to kiss the spray !

While from the grove rose sweeter strains
Than e'er on earth I heard before ;
The lake replied in soft refrains,
That rippling float from shore to shore !

Yet all that meet my wondering eyes,
Are fragile, feathery, graceful ferns,
Turning their fronds where *Shadow* lies—
Lest *Light* the hidden fay discerns !

O haunted homes of fairest sprites,
That bound me in your wondrous spell !—
But don't you free all mortal wights,
Who dare of fairydom to tell ?

Then fays and ferns, and ferns and fays,
For ever haunt your ancient lake !
Though all forgot the perished bays—
That memory oft wreathes for your sake !

December, 1874.

M A Y.

MAY! May! May! O word which means all glory,
Which mortal eyes may see or senses feel!
Radiant and sweet—all song, all leaves, all bloom
She comes—a saint, a queen, a goddess—bride!

How strangely stir its pulses in the heart
That shrinks within itself at breath of May!
Like pilgrim weary, travel-stained, and worn,
Who shades his tear-dimm'd eyes from glare of day ;
Or, like a woman, silver-tress'd with age,
Gazing on sweetheart tokens of her spring,
Feels her heart stir within her as she looks,
And learns a crumbling rosebud can reveal
The sacred immortality of love !

So do I hush my pain and write of May,
Of Life, of Death, and of one little child.

She was my first-born, born in leafy June,
When with their load of sweetness rose-trees bow'd,
And woodbine lavish'd to the gales its breath.
Then came the babe ; but Death still walks with Life,
And in my darkened room its shadow hung.
Yet still a silent joy my being fill'd—
The babe made life so sweet, and being sweet
Life triumph'd !—Oh, the power that mite possess'd !
A dainty mite it was when three days old
(Then first I saw it)—pretty oval face,
Two beads of eyes so dark, with a small mouth,
Which in repose was sweet, with chin to match.
How my eyes feasted on her till they ached ;
And when she nestled 'gainst my thankful heart
She was so precious even to her robe.
When slumber came it brought a dim, vague dread,

Lest in the darkness I would lose the babe,
And, waking, stretched my longing arms for her,
My life, my tiny love, my May!

“May,” that was my darling’s name,
Her father said I loved wild-flowers, so
The babe should bear that name, and so it was.
“May,” “May,” “May,” the name itself was sweetness—
We cannot speak the word but think of Spring,
Of banks with velvet moss, where violets peep—
Of thrushes, and of leaves—cool, fresh, green leaves.
Ah, how I sought the May-flower when a girl!
Now babe and flower, and flower and babe, seem’d one,
And each was dearer for the other’s sake.
May, May, May, should I too oft repeat it!
Oh, think what joy, bright hope, and gladness
I centred once in that dear name—and now—
All that I own is memory, and a name—
A name that stares at me from vacant rooms,
Through which I search in vain for more than that—
A name that kills me with a leaden grief
When on some little empty shoes I look;
But hardest, most irrevocable, when
I on a cold white tablet gaze, and read
The dear familiar name, while tears rain, “May!”

She lived with me, this first-born of my love,
Till six brief summers old, and then she sped
Like bird which must not tarry from its home,

And left my life, years, years—but never May.

Sisters she had born dear unto my heart
As aught on earth has power to be dear,
Dimpled and sweet with laughing eyes of blue,
And all the rosy loveliness of health ;
But the lost child held that mysterious place
In love called first, in life still held the best.
Love is but love, but love has higher heights,
As grief has deeper depths, as mourners know ;
And as our hearts have power to be glad,
So will their sorrow in proportion be.

The child had hazel eyes, with type of face
Called *spirituelle*—more of sweetness had
Than power possessing ; yet she was gay,
And had a merry laugh, which echoes still
Within some silent chambers of my heart.

A pretty way of saying “ Mamma,” too,
Coaxing for tales with brows so lightly arch’d,
Or asking questions of this world of ours.

“ Why did the lion eat the lamb?” she asked ;
And when answered said, “ Poor lamb, poor lamb!”

“ But God made flowers, so He must be right.”

Many a day we wandered hand-in-hand
To cull the flowers she loved, for in the sun,
And ’mid the flowers her glad young heart rejoiced.

With her growth, so grew my love,
Expanding into all she took delight in ;

For even the vagrant's child, if 'twas her age,
Had a fresh claim to pity and to aid.
And well my love she knew and answered back,
For in her mind affection's roots had strength,
And the fresh soul loved on without alloy,
So trusting and so tendril-like her love,
As day by day her footsteps kept my side.
But day by day her eyes more solemn grew,
And her light footsteps lost their eager bound,
While sharper grew the lineaments I loved,
And dull the pain which found my heart of hearts—
And cruel was the truth revealed—decay!
O May! sweet May!—to fade from eyes that watched
As only yearning love like mine could watch!
And now a change came o'er the mind so pure:—
She bade me tell her of that shining throng
Which we call angels; wondered much of Heaven,
Talked of the story of the Bethlehem Babe,
Of Joseph, and of David, which she read
And thought of too; but as she prattled thus,
I saw the end, and even comfort took
That saints and patriarchs would perfect make
Her mind, and worthy Him who signalled—"Come!"
And now the golden head hung on my breast,
And heavier grew my heart beneath its touch,
Until there came a day she kept her couch,
With little burning palms locked fast in mine.

Peaceful she slept awhile, but towards the dawn
Her eyes mysterious chill'd me as I gazed,
While my awed speech could only whisper—"May!"
"Darling!"—I could not trust my voice for more;
She moved her lips to whisper back again,
The heavy hazel eyes ope'd once to smile—
Part was for opening Heaven, part for me;
There came a solemn rapture o'er her brow,
Nature's last thrill, then, then—in Heaven
An angel waked—on earth I lost my May!

December, 1871.

REQUIESCAT IN PACE.

A Monarch sleeps—the solemn requiem blest,
Chaunts its soft music lowly for his rest;
Still swells its pathos, pours its pious trust—
Napoleon, Emperor, soldier, exile, dust!

Requiescat in pace!

War and its tumults now are hushed for thee,
Past its defeats, its conquests, pageantry;
For thee no legions march, no banners wave,
No powers league, no factions wildly rave.

Requiescat in pace!

Fame with false lustre, and with empty breath,
No more can move the tranquil sleep of death ;
Gone in the rapids of that silent river
That bore thee to the ocean of " For Ever."

Requiescat in pace !

Imperial Eagle, that victorious flew
O'er snow-crown'd Alps and Tyrol mountains blue,
Say where, bold pinions, didst thou fear to soar ?
Let Europe answer—Thou shalt lead no more !

Requiescat in pace !

Oblivious now of all thy valorous pride,
When loyal Britain, fighting by thy side,
Made Alma's heights a name for classic story,
And Danube's flood a mirror for thy glory.

Requiescat in pace !

Oblivious now of Paris or Sedan—
A king, or captive, means but mortal man !
The circling ages teach it as they wing,
And we but blend with pæans that they sing—

Requiescat in pace !

O France, the sport of ever-changing state ;
O France, who toys with sceptres as with Fate ;
O France, who madly laughs or wildly weeps ;
O trickster, cease thy games—he sleeps, he sleeps—

Requiescat in pace !

Then strew the flowers, and bid the tapers shine,
Humble thyself from Seine to banks of Rhine !
Question the vista of departed years,
Then, wayward France, then answer with thy tears.

Requiescat in pace !

Then learn of Nature's fixed unswerving laws,
Learn how Effect is but the growth of Cause ;
To thine own self be true, degenerate France,
Hush thy shrill clarion, curb thy restless lance.

Requiescat in pace !

"REPOSE IN PEACE !" O solemn seal of life,
Of fame, of fortune, friendship, and of strife,
Of thrones, of dynasties, of all—but love,
Whose faithful fervor mounts to thrones above !

Requiescat in pace !

THE monody, "Requiescat in pace," was written on request of the Ballymena Elocution Class, Lord Waveney, President. The subject was selected by me, as one with which I warmly sympathise, as well as affording dramatic scope to a reader, who, on this occasion, was Professor Browne of Belfast, each verse being followed by an improvised pianoforte refrain by Mr. Cooney, Church Organist, Ballymena ; and when commenting on the result, the Press was pleased to say that it commanded profound attention, and produced a solemnizing effect on all classes of the audience.

I have since been honoured with a letter from the ex-Empress Eugenie, conveying in the warmest terms the thanks and compliments of her Majesty for a presentation copy of this requiem.—IDA.

TILL DEATH US PART.

“TILL death us part!” O lips now sealed!
Well kept by thee that sacred vow,
Years but its holy truth revealed,
Which makes this anguish keener now!

Life is but short, true love is long,
The years as days seemed by thy side;
Their record never stained by wrong,
Faith pure, as when thou wert a bride!

Life is but short—the speechless pain
As shadowed forth in fiat brief,
The dead face do we kiss in vain,
Will love not avail, nor grief?

As I gaze on thy still form, there,
Springs from depths of my stricken heart
Those words which but seal my despair,
The words of our vow—“till death part!”

And death—has it cancelled that vow?
Is the past save memory perished?
O form ever hallowed as now!
Is that pledge no longer cherish’d?

Ah, then, I will keep it alone !
And thus triumph o'er vanished years,
Thy bliss now enjoyed will atone,
'Tho' I own it thro' blinding tears !

Farewell then awhile, my true wife !
Day soon is followed by even,
And so soon shall my now sundered life
Seek thee, beloved angel, in heaven !

DUNLUOE.

An Echo from the Ruins.

I WROTE a name upon the sand
The envious wave away it bore :
Love laughed—" My sway, that ruled thy hand,
Will live when waves shall roll no more !"

I climbed a ruin, grim and hoary,
To carve that name high on its walls,
That so 'twould last like ancient story
Of love and arms within its halls.

But as I graved the letters there
The fragment falls !—Time, seize thy prey :
O royal Love, canst tell me where
' To trace that name beyond decay ?

E'en as I spoke a voice replied,
All round its silver accents flinging—
What fays and sprites are at my side?—
From keep to roof the query's ringing!

Ha! Echo, 'tis thy mocking self;
To thee I'll teach a sweet refrain—
One name alone, thou mimic elf,
Repeat to winds or waves again.

The name—"name!" Hearken, Echo, wait—
"Wait!" I'll tell—"I'll tell!" Beware—"beware!"—
I tell thee, imp, thou temptest fate—
Back rings my threat on empty air!

Would that my *heart* were fitting shrine
For that dear name!—I'd hide it there,
And loyal Love, intense, divine,
Should guard with life my treasure rare.

1874.



THE TRYST.

OH sing to me, dear bird of Spring!
Thy one still welcome strain,
For to-night my gentle sweetheart
Meets me in woodbine lane.

Her tryst place is beside the style,
Where but one sound is heard—
A welcome note, a welcome note—
Spring's own true herald bird.

“Cuckoo! Cuckoo! Cuckoo! Cuckoo!”
But when a step is nigh,
Hushed is the oft-repeated word,
For *somebody* comes by.

O cuckoo, sing again, again—
Be calm, my beating heart,
While I pluck woodbine for my love—
My love, my life's best part!

But hark! she comes, 'mid song and bloom
(Her fitting, rightful dower),
Oh may the coming years still bless
This eve in trysting bower!

ONE WITHERED SPRAY.

"Lead back this heart to distant hours,
When on its hopes they smiled with gladness,
Like summer suns on infant flowers."—RUDERKIN.

'Twas Spring.

In all the land the gentle queen held court,
Buds burst in joyous myriads into life,
That woke from all the woods a sweet response ;
The very daisies, crush'd 'neath peasants' tread,
Now poured their floods of sweetness to the breeze,
That bore glad music to the happy vales,
While every brook's sweet burthen was "rejoice."

And I, Annette, seventeen in years,
Ran forth to meet the fairest haunts of May,
With quickened pulse to drink the radiance in,
For then I loved ; and love's the magic glass
Through which we see new wonders of the sun,
New beauty in the flowers, glory everywhere.
Plucking the early blossoms in the path
I lingered till was reached a dell most dear—
A solitary spot, known only to two souls ;
Some timid violets, and a stream,
That seemed to steal between its tufted banks,
And murmur some soft chorus—"Love and life."

There was our trysting place, and it was there,
Julian had said, the very eve before,

"Annette, sweet, a little while we part ;
Fate wills it—we are poor—and gold's to win.
I will not speak of absence, time, or change—
My heart's thy own—Can'st thou respond, Annette ?
And promise me the dear return of thine."

Did I believe ?—Yes, as in sun or stream,
I loved him as I loved the heavens blue,
And all that lay beyond them ; so I spoke—
" Sweetheart, I promise, thee I'll love till death!"
And thus we parted, and the Spring sped on,
And merged in Summer's glory all too soon ;
For were I given choice of that Spring time,
Or mountains piled on mountains of rare gems,
'Twould be, not baubles bright, but that sweet Spring.

Soon Autumn came—my heart beat out the time,
As leaves I'd watched unfold began to fall,
Ere tidings came—tidings irrevocable—brief.
Julian was wed—his bride an heiress proud ;
And what I hung on most, her name was Marian.

In solemn desolation, Winter came.
My heart, all schooling into rest refused,
Yet would not break, but lay in my dull breast,
A well of memory and a grave of joy.

" O Spring !" I cried, and duly Spring returned,
'To weave her spells and deck the meads again,
For Nature keeps her pledges to mankind.
Led by some mystic yearning of my soul,

I sought once more that sacred tryst-place lone.
Sacred !—Ah no, 'twas desecrated ground !
Dear and familiar, yet for ever changed.
“Where is the sunshine of the dell?” I moaned,
My cheek against a hawthorn's rugged trunk,
Till shook the tree with my emotion, vain !
Casting its snowy blossoms in the brook !
But ah, the brook for answer swept them on,
Muttering strange words that scared me—so I fled !

* * * * *

Marian ! • Julian's bride, I have a secret still.
Above my heart that grew so early old
There lies the faded semblance of a flower.
The hand which culled and gave it, need I say?
Have the May sunshine ever with thee, Marian !
And revel in the breath of living flowers !
While in the long, long Winter of my soul,
I cherish but this *vestige* of my Spring,
And when thou hearest my story—blame me not !



A LIFE.

In multimo parvo.

WINDS, winds, winds, winds of Hallowe'en !
Winds, winds, winds, winds of young November !
Winds, winds that rudely break my dream !
And waken me—but to remember !

Ah, roving winds of land and sea,
Ye bluster to me of a solemn truth—
Ye tell of winters, ten times three,
Whistling away this night with my youth !

One year, when pale October died—
'Twixt wane of night and the dawn of morn—
Wail, wail, first winds of Hallowtide !
Amidst your moaning I was born !

Born to roam through a dreary world,
Searching for what I never could find ;
Hope, like a pennon still unfurled,
Love—a sweet myth to my eager mind.

Stay, wand'ring winds, one moment stay !
I'll cancel bitterest words e'er spoken ;
One love was mine, in years away—
Ah, silver chord, on earth now broken !

And so my song is but a dirge—
Rude notes that echo still a pain,
Telling my life what ocean's surge
Sings to the bark of a stormy main.

Storms, still storms, till I dream of rest—
Of rest and refuge still retreating—
Vain phantom of my weary breast,
Yet phantom bliss I'm still repeating.

What has the future?—if ye know,
O winds, I charge ye, now reveal!
Murmur it softly ere ye go—
If dark as the past, break not the seal!

The winds still rose in angry strife,
For the winds and waves but *One* obey;
Then bright and dark threads of my life
May weave out the web as best they may!

For Summer, my Summer, is flown!
As a tale that is told of lost glory—
Traced on dead leaves, the winds have blown,
And blotted with tears the whole story!

1st November, 1870.

IN THE NURSERY.

You want another story—

Only one more !

After I have told to you

Fully half a score.

You'll all be so very good,

Like your dolls be quiet ;

And for five whole minutes cease

Rampage and riot.

Six busy, tricky hands,

Folded for a treat ;

And rare sight to see at rest

All the little feet.

Then from Tiny, Dot, and Trot,

Hazel eyes and blue,

Comes the old, old query back,

“ Is the story true ? ”

Oh, such a true, true story,

If you're very good,

About a pretty little house,

Built within a wood !

Boughs and branches all around—
Quite a leafy screen ;
For the lady of the house
Was not often seen.

The reason why was very plain,
For just like me,
There she nursed with tender love,
Little darlings three.

Their pa' he was a piper,
And the whole day long,
Woke the very echoes there,
With merry floods of song.

A cosy house, a happy life,
People used to say ;
Mrs. Robin was so good,
Mr. R—— so gay.

Thus they lived until one day,—
“Ha! they flew ; we've guess'd ;
Now, mamma, we've found you out—
A nest ! a nest ! a nest !”

May 1873.

"VIOLET VICTORIA."

THE snowdrops of the valley all had fled,
The hawthorn all its sweetest scent had shed,
The last pale primrose deck'd Spring's graceful crest,
And drooping violets wept o'er her breast ;
My favourite blossoms vanished, one by one,
Till all the fragile visitors were gone.

Then came the Summer with its azure skies,
Clothing the landscape with unnumbered dyes,
Waking proud roses into wondrous bloom,
And filling all the air with rich perfume ;
I saw the groves with gorgeous glory beam,
And flowers adorning bank, and bower, and stream ;
A wealth of fragrance and of beauty rare—
But no loved lowly violet was there :
That tiny favourite of the perfumed lea—
Sweet emblem of all grace and purity.

'Mid all the floral gems of Summer birth
No violet was visible on earth—
And yet I found one ! 'Twas a gift of love,
Prized as God's highest blessing from above—
A tiny gem from heaven's own bright parterre,
Nurtur'd to being 'neath an angel's care ;
An ever-precious pearl of nameless price—
My darling VIOLET from Paradise !

My own dear baby-blossom ! none more fair
E'er claimed from woman's love a mother's care.
When first I pressed thee to my throbbing breast,
And hush'd thy infant murmurings into rest,
Wild thrills of rapturous joy my being moved—
Was ever flow'ret yet more fondly loved ?

A thousand streams of feeling gush to thee,
Like sun-lit currents rushing to the sea :
A thousand hopes that still in thee I'd trace
Truth, honor, virtue, purity, and grace.
The ways of wisdom be for ever thine,
While in thy bliss, I'll find reflected mine.

November, 1865.

TEMPUS FUGIT.

"Ring out the old, ring in the new."—*Tennyson.*

'Twas midnight, and a monarch lay
In sable garments quaintly clad,
Throbbing his weary heart away,
Neglected, old, forsaken, sad.

But now the priests bring book and bell,
And last, tho' late, his subjects throng
To bid the dying king farewell,
And chant one last and tribute song.

And one, the veriest rebel there,
 Alternate swayed with guilt and grief,
And grim remorse, and gaunt despair—
 Oh, heaven is high, and life is brief !

And yet the injured king still lives ;
 Would he for pardon sue in vain ?
A noble mind still most forgives—
 Confession lightens bitter pain.

The thought thus flashed athwart his brain,
 And kindled in his laden heart,
As sunbeams o'er a snow-wreathed plain
 Oft side-long glance and then depart.

Then hastes he to the palace gate—
 No testy guards were stationed there ;
They revelled in the halls of state,
 And watched but for the coming heir.

And onwards, to the monarch's feet,
 Half frenzied with his hopes and fears ;
Far off the crowds raise pæans sweet,
 But he could only bring his tears !

Then, by the dim uncertain flame
 From an expiring taper shed,
Was told a traitor's deed of shame
 That well might shock a dying bed.

* * * * *

Too late, too late ! the sands are run ;
Too late ! the flickering light hath fled !
Too late ! bells toll that solemn " one !"
Too late, too late !—the old year's dead.

1st January, 1874.

V I O L E T S .

" A violet on a mossy bank,
Half hidden from the eye,
Bright as a star when only one
Is shining in the sky."

WHY do ye linger from my longing sight,
Sweet modest gems with heaven's own azure bright—
Wherefore not hasten with the love and light
Thy blossoms bear ?
Oft have I sought thee in thy mossy bower,
In noontide sun and evening's sacred hour,
Hoping to find my peerless little flower
Scenting the air.

Dear Primrose came, and in my heart distilled
Warm sunshine and fresh love—but left unfilled
Thy corner, where for ever thrilled
The love all thine :

A crystal bell-flower came ; its petals shone
As though an angel's gentle breath alone
Had formed a sparkling gem to gaze upon—
A thing divine !

I plucked its tiny stem, and kissed the dew,
That flashed like love, when love is pure and true,
But, while it nestled at my heart, I drew

A sigh for thee :

Then wake, my woodland queen—my fairy fair,
And hold thy court—my simple altar's there ;
And whilst I twine thy blossoms in my hair,
Childhood renew.

March, 1864.

DOWN THE STREAM.

BLUE stretched the summer sky,
Soft, cloudless, and serene,
As I sauntered idly on
In a shadowed sort of dream ;
My heart the while so weary,
That even the flowers looked dreary,
But the stream it sang a cheery
“ Follow, follow,
Follow down the stream !”

So its music guided,
As ever guides one beam
From even one lone star,
And it drew me with its gleam ;
To where the lillies shimmer,
In a soft translucent glimmer
Of pure beauty, till less dimmer
Shone the uplands,
By that ' Follow ' of the stream !

'Then memory woke her shadows,
That would like torrents pour,
O'er my heart left plundered
Of what returns no more !
O lillies, as ye float along,
Wooed by sunshine, lull'd by song,
Why the pain and why the wrong
Existing here ?
Whisper through the ' Follow ' of the stream !

For brooks and flowers have voices,
Friendly and sage, I ween ;
So I hearkened by its silver course,
Quiet as a moonbeam :—
" Success is the badge of merit,
All who labour shall inherit,
And win or loose, just learn to bear it—
Like the lillies,
Follow, follow, down the stream !

“ Learn to labour and to wait,
Hope and trust,” so sang the stream,
“ Ask the lillies, ask the meadows,
If I ever pause to dream :
Always set the current right ;
Faint not, nor be awed by might ;
The end will bring reward to light—
Courage ! Follow !
Follow down the stream !”

June, 1870.

THE LYRE.

A WANDERER in a woodland wild,
Unheeding as a careless child,
I roved and found a treasure sweet—
A lyre!—’mid blossoms at my feet ;
And then my hands, unskilled and rude,
Woke with its notes the solitude,
And blent with wind’s untutored strains,
And mingled with the stream, refrains,
And ever where fresh garlands hung,
Its chords their deepest rapture flung.

And onwards still, as thus I strayed
By mountain, glen, or forest glade,
All seem’d as new as when is riven
The mists which veil the light of heaven !

In a grand halo of delight
Earth grew more fair, and dear, and bright,
And every pulse of light revealed
The joy which that wild lyre unsealed.

A mystic thing; at evening's close,
When troubled thought would woo repose,
How gently it my spirit swayed,
As if an angel with me prayed,
Till, pilgrim-like, I sought a shrine—
Thus seeks the human the divine—
While on its trembling chords would steal
Echoes of what the seraphs feel.

But what can stay the wingéd hours ?
Alas ! for mirth, and song, and flowers,
They only speed the flying years,
Whose record's oft retraced with tears.
So as of old, the changes rung
Of love and death, the lyre sung,
Until, beneath emotion's sway,
Its tones would falter in the lay.

And often, too, my skill, so rude,
Would waken chords not understood
In some all coldly placid breast,
Unmoved by grief, by love unblest ;

And thoughts regretful thus would come,
Chaining my spirit, sad and dumb—
If I had not that lyre found,
Some worthier hand had waked its sound!

Waked it with power, grace, and skill,
Till with its notes a world should thrill !
Perhaps a Sappho's hand, again,
Had breathed through it her melting strain ;
Or, guided by an Orpheus' sway,
The bitterest griefs been charmed away!
Now, as *one* life's dear counterpart,
Its only empire was my heart.

And there, O Lyre, obscure, unknown,
I gave but love!—can love atone ?
Oh ! if it may, for love's sweet will,
Wake now, or be for ever still !
Bid all thy chords in homage glow
In strains that kindle as they flow,
For him, the Raleigh of his day,
Who paused to list thy rustic lay.

He whom the stately Lawrence tide
To all her cities, boasts with pride,
Statesman and scholar, nobly great
In all that can adorn a State.

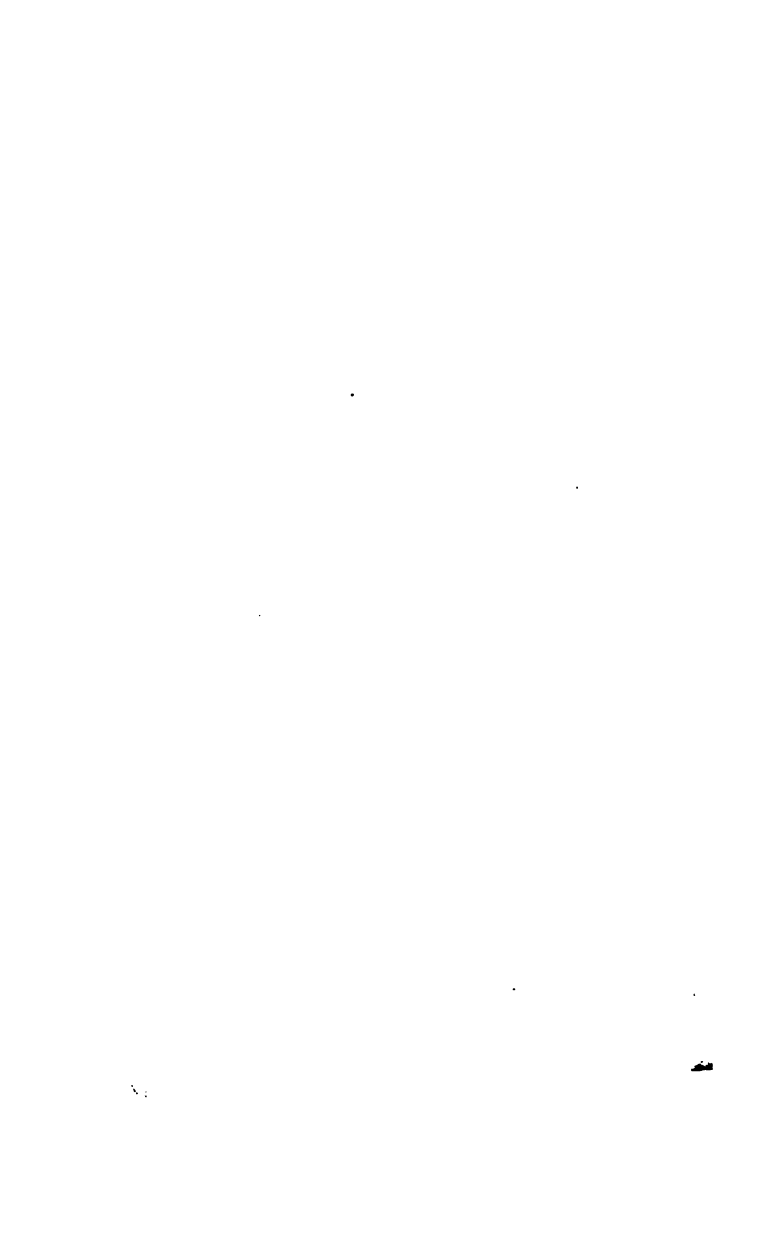
He whom our England's brightest page
Shall mark as one who formed the age,
Yet lent the lustre of that name
To light thy doubtful path to fame.

Then haste ! thy simple tribute pour
With faith as lofty as of yore ;
And should no answering welcome wait,
Enough !—thou hast fulfilled thy fate ;
But haply, if his voice should praise,
The words shall be thy dearest bays,
Which round thee I will fondly twine,
And green in memory keep the shrine !

May, 1875.



BELFAST :
ARCHER & SONS, PRINTERS, WELLINGTON PLACE.





the 1990s, the number of people with a mental health problem has increased by 50% (Mental Health Foundation, 2000). The prevalence of mental health problems has increased in the general population, and the incidence of mental health problems has increased in the prison population (Mental Health Foundation, 2000).

There is a growing awareness of the need to address the mental health needs of prisoners. The Mental Health Act 1983 (MHA) was amended in 1997 to include provisions for the treatment of mental health problems in the prison population. The MHA 1997 requires that prisoners with a mental health problem must be assessed and treated in a manner that is consistent with the principles of the MHA 1983. The MHA 1997 also requires that prisoners with a mental health problem must be provided with the same standards of care as those provided to the general population. The MHA 1997 also requires that prisoners with a mental health problem must be provided with the same opportunities for rehabilitation as those provided to the general population.

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